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a comparator circuit for outputting a signal as a fault signal when an output voltage from the difference voltage detection circuit deviates from a reference value.--

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 6 and 7 are added. No new matter is added.

In the Restriction Requirement, restriction between the following groups of claims is required: Group I, comprising claims 1-3 and drawn to apparatus; and Group II, comprising claims 4 and 5, and drawn to methods. The Restriction Requirement further requires that, if Group I is elected, further election of species is required to elect among the species of Fig. 1, Fig. 1 modified by Fig. 2, Fig. 1 modified by Fig. 4, Fig. 13A and Fig. 13B.

Applicants provisionally elect Group I, the species of Fig. 1, with traverse, and respectfully submit that at least claims 1-4, 6 and 7 are directed to the species of Fig. 1.

Regarding the Election of Species, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-4 are all directed to the species of Fig. 1. Particularly, the feature "middle point," recited in claims 1-4 is shown in Fig. 1. Claims 2 and 3 also recite additional features, such as "identical pole," and "difference voltage detection" and "comparator circuit," respectively, and thus have a narrower scope than claim 1. Thus, claim 1 recites the "middle point" feature which is a feature common among claims 2-4.

In addition, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 4 recites a method which necessarily uses the product recited in claim 3, and that claim 3 recites a product that must be used in the method recited in claim 4. Thus, claim 4 is not restrictable from claim 3 under MPEP §806.05(h). Accordingly, claim 4 should be examined together with claims 1-3. Claims 6 and 7 depend from claim 1 and recite further limiting features.

Further, Applicants respectfully submit that the subject matter of all claims is sufficiently related that a thorough search for the subject matter of any one group of claims

would encompass a search for the subject matter of the remaining claims. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the search and examination of the entire application could be made without serious burden. See MPEP §803 in which it is stated that "if the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions" (emphasis added). It is respectfully submitted that this policy should apply in the present application in order to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to Applicants and duplicative examination by the Patent Office.

For at least the above reasons, withdrawal of the Restriction Requirement is respectfully requested. Prompt examination and allowance of pending claims 1-7 is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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